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1Twenty80

YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH PLATFORM

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MEN'S HEALTH: A FAMILY PRIORITY

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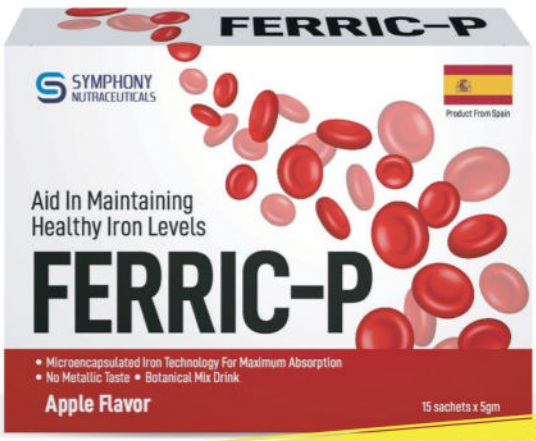

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Ferrous Fumarate - Uses, Side Effects and More (2022). WebMD. https://www.webmd.com/drugs/2/drug-4129/ferrous-fumarate-oral/details
Synder, C. (2021 January 5). Ferrous Sulfate: Benefits, Uses, Side Effects, and More Healthline. https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/ferrous-sulfate#bottom-line

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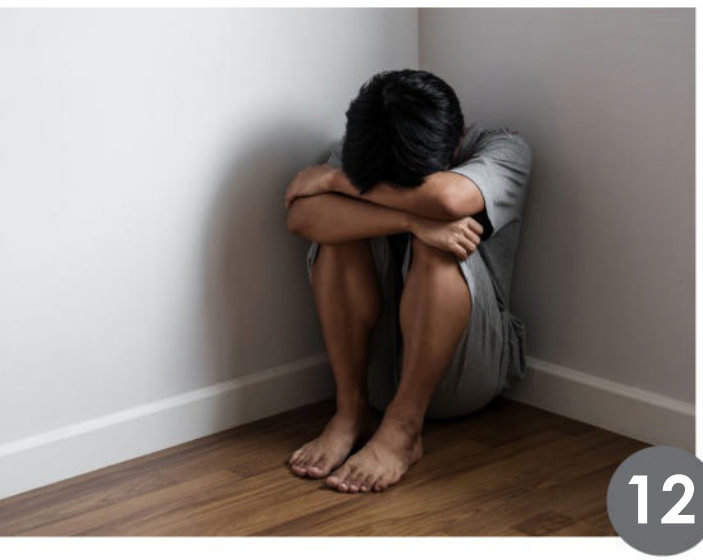

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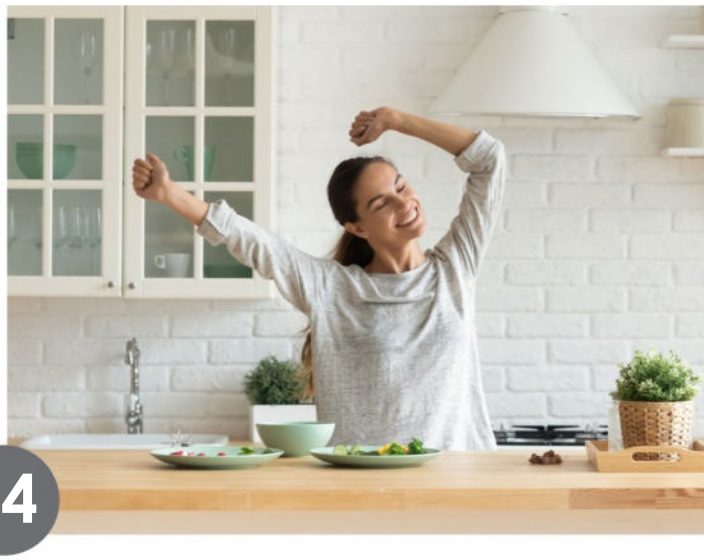

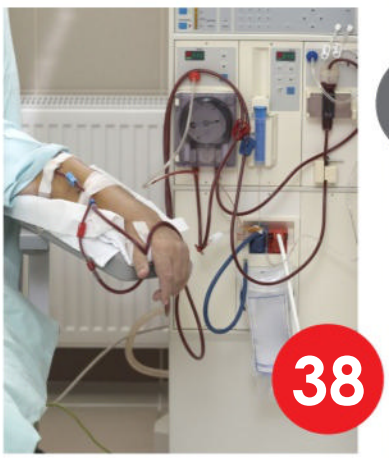

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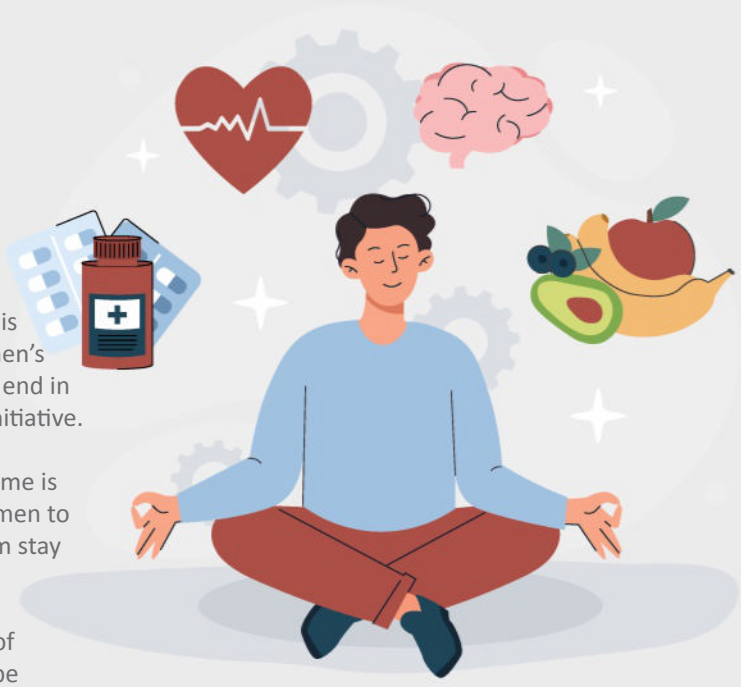

Every November, a huge emphasis is placed on men's health and and this is no doubt a good initiative. However, men's health awareness should not start and end in November, it should be a year round initiative.

While the education and awareness game is strong, the most important part is for men to take the right action that can help them stay healthy.

Knowledge is key but the second part of it is even more important, which is to be proactive when it comes to your health. More often than not, many fear the unknown and therefore avoid health screenings or even to visit the doctor for the fear that a diagnosis will be made.

If this is you, a change in mindset is important.

It must be known that a medical condition is not a sign of weakness. Imagine your health like a business, it's running well but after awhile, you start to realise that there are signs or red flags in the company that needs addressing but as a leader, you choose to ignore it. In the long run, you realise that more issues and trouble occurred because of those initial red flags. Instead of addressing them initially, you are now required to solve a much larger problem.

Hence, just like your health, addressing a health issue at its early stage increases your chances of recovery. Why wait for a fire to engulf the entire house before putting it out?

Men, we urge you to take charge of your health. Remember, a diagnosis is not a weakness and as a matter of fact and, if you're a part of a man's support system, we encourage you to be aware and support men in staying healthy too.

Take care and don't forget to spread joy and love in our community. To our readers celebrating the festival of lights, we would like to wish you a Blessed Diwali.

Edeline

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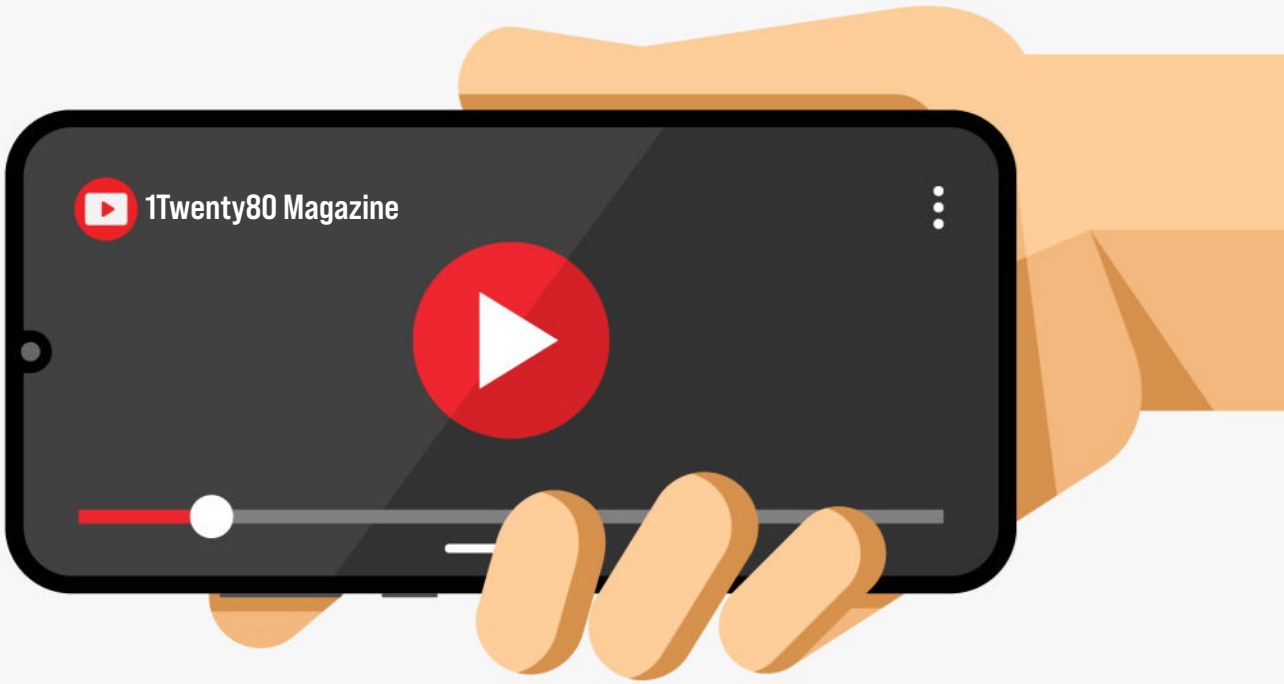
YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH PLATFORM



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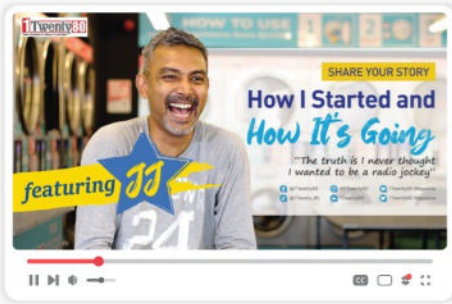

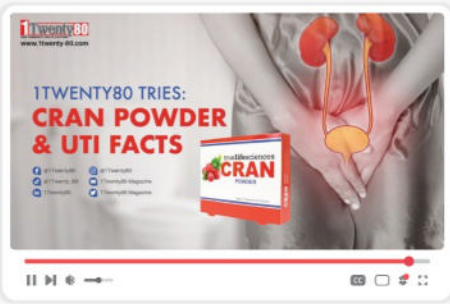

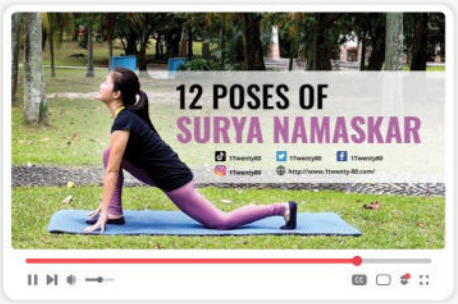

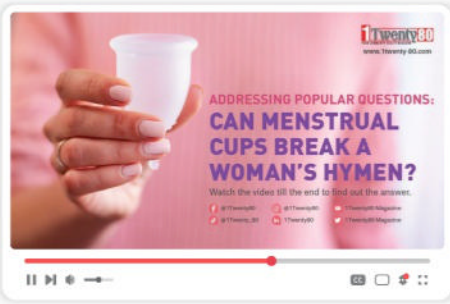

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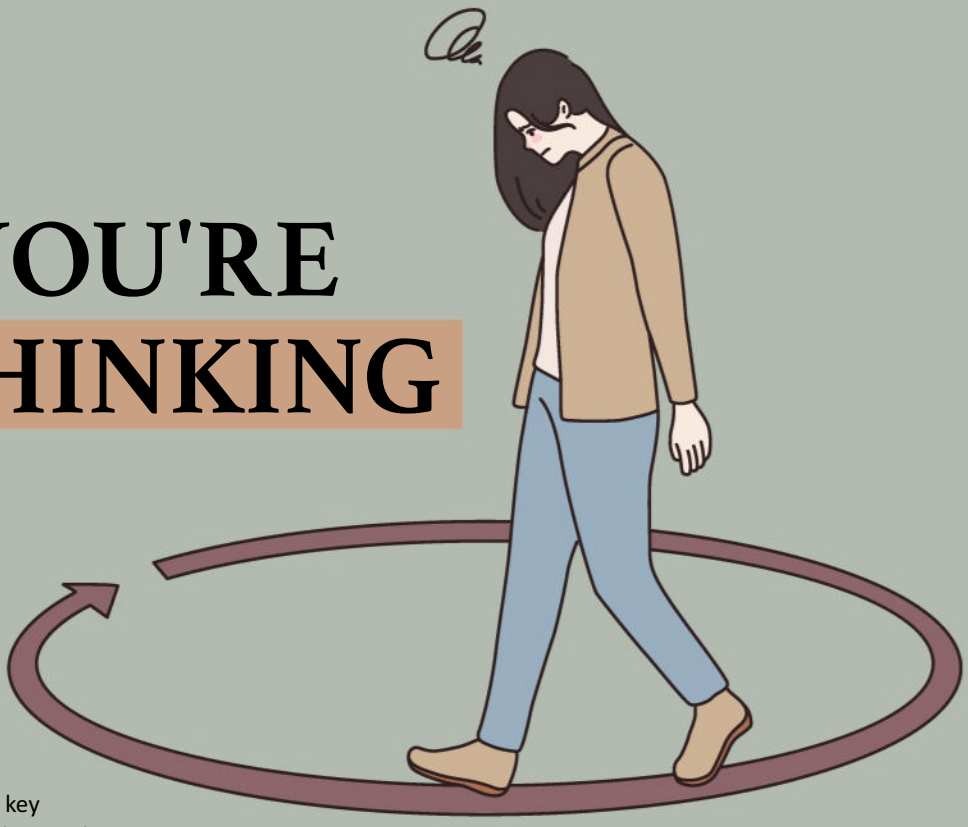
4 SIGNS YOU'RE OVERTHINKING



Why you should keep tabs on your thought patterns

By Isabel Andrew

Have you ever found yourself stuck in a loop of thinking about the same thing? Overthinking can be a pesky habit to break. You might even convince yourself that ruminating over something for a long time is the key to developing the best solution. But how do you know when it has gone too far? Here are four signs you could be overthinking.

#1
YOU FIXATE ON UNCONTROLLABLE MATTERS.

You are a new recruit and find yourself making minor mistakes. You take these slip-ups personally and begin to wonder if you're not a good fit or if your manager will terminate you. You constantly overthink, isolate yourself from your team, and avoid collaborative learning. Eventually, you foster self-discontent, envy towards colleagues, and despise your job. The reality is that the only things within your control are your effort and attitude.

#2
YOU SHOW PHYSICAL SIGNS.

Nighttime becomes an endless checklist of tomorrow's tasks. You feel the urge to make sure that everything is ready for the next day so that you can control how your day goes. This constant mental agitation can take a toll on your body, leading to insomnia, headaches, muscle tension, and increased stress levels. Consequently, you have difficulties concentrating at school or work, trouble sleeping, changes in appetite and other serious health conditions.

#3
YOU FEAR THE UNKNOWN FUTURE.

Before attending social events, you're engulfed by a flood of negative thoughts and worst-case scenarios that may never unfold. You dissect every detail, from your chosen outfit to the potential guests you'll be meeting. How should you react if a topic you want to avoid is brought up? At the eleventh hour, you decide to not show up because you've convinced yourself that it's going to be a disaster.

#4
YOU CONSTANTLY REPLAY THE TAPE.

What may seem like a friendly exchange of texts with your best friend lingers in your mind long after it has ended. You find yourself second-guessing your friend's replies. If they used an emoji, you scrutinise their tone by scrolling through previous messages to see what it could mean. You try to read between the lines over and over again.

Isn't it exhausting just reading these? The next time those thoughts start to spiral, pause, take a breath, and remind yourself that you've got this. We care about you, so give yourself a break!

Sources: Very Well Mind, Houston Methodist, Cleveland Clinic

Men and pelvic floor health

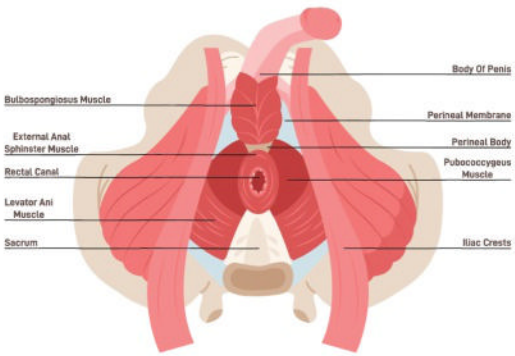
What you should be doing more

By Isabel Andrew

Pelvic floor muscles are an abandoned part of the body. We don't seem to talk enough about this part of our anatomy much like we do with our hamstrings and biceps. So come and learn with us!

We use it to poop, pee and have sex

Yeap, you read that right. We use our pelvic floor muscles a lot when we poop, pee and have sex. This is because our pelvic floor literally acts as a floor, holding up vital organs like our pelvis, bladder, intestines and internal reproductive organs. Its muscles and connective tissues provide flexibility for bodily functions to occur. They also absorb external pressure when we lift heavy things or simply cough. This goes a long way in protecting our spine and organs.



Speaking of muscles, the ability to control our pelvic floor muscles forms the process of waste removal. The pelvic floor muscles coordinate the urethra and the anus. When we squeeze the muscles, the passageways narrow, causing the stool to pass through. Basically it:

- Supports the bladder, urethra, prostate, bowel (large intestine), rectum and anus.
- Squeezes and relaxes when peeing, pooping or passing gas.
- Helps with erections and ejaculation during sex.

What can go wrong

Pelvic floor muscles can be weakened by:

Surgery for bladder or bowel problems

Constipation

Being overweight

Persistent heavy lifting

High-impact exercise

Persistent coughing

Ageing

As a result, weak pelvic floor muscles can lead to:

- **STRESS INCONTINENCE:** Peeing when you laugh, cough, sneeze or lift something.
- **URGE INCONTINENCE:** Frequently feeling the urge to pee and not being able to hold it.
- **FAECAL INCONTINENCE:** Struggling to control bowel movements.
- **ANAL INCONTINENCE:** Struggling to control when you pass gas.

Can they be too tight? They sure can! Hypertonic pelvic floor occurs when the muscles are tense and can't relax. People with this issue experience constipation, painful sex, urgency and pelvic pain.

How to solve it

Before working on it, you must first feel your pelvic floor muscles. Try these out:

- **Urethra:** Imagine that you're peeing and squeezing as if you were stopping the flow midstream.
- **Anus:** Squeeze your anus as if you were preventing yourself from breaking wind. In each case, you should feel muscles inside your pelvis pull inward and upward. These are your pelvic floor muscles.
- Stand in front of a mirror with no clothes on. Pull in your pelvic floor muscles strongly and hold them. You should see the penis draw in and your scrotum should lift.

Now that you know where they are, try out these popular pelvic floor muscle exercises, also known as Kegel exercises:

1. Squeeze and draw in the muscles around your anus. Lift them up inside. You should have a sense of "lift" each time you squeeze your pelvic floor muscles.
2. Try to hold them strong and tight as you count to 8. Now, let them go and relax. You should have a distinct feeling of "letting go". If you can't hold for 8, just hold for as long as you can.
3. Repeat "squeeze and lift" and let go. It is best to rest for about 8 seconds in between each lift-up of the muscles.
4. Repeat this "squeeze and lift" as many times as you can, up to a limit of 8 to 10 squeezes. This equals one set.
5. Try to do three sets of 8 to 10 squeezes each day.

Kegel exercises can be done anywhere while sitting, standing or lying down. Remember to:

- Keep breathing.
- Only squeeze and lift.
- Do not tighten your buttocks.
- Keep your thighs relaxed.

Other treatments include:

- Managing constipation through diet, exercise or medications.
- Surgery to reconstruct and secure your pelvic organs in place.

Pelvic floor exercises are highly effective when individually tailored and monitored. If you are unsure, don't risk it. Speak to pelvic health physiotherapists for their expert opinions.

In summary...

- Healthy pelvic floor muscles will help you go about your day with more ease.
- Men too can experience urinary incontinence.
- Your pelvic floor muscles play an important role when having sex.
- It's not only weakened pelvic floor muscles that you should worry about, tensed pelvic floor muscles can also cause discomfort. ■

Sources: Mayo Clinic, Healthline

THE MANLY STRUGGLE *with* MENTAL HEALTH

Why men shouldn't be excluded from the conversation

By Isabel Andrew

In modern times, mental health is no longer a swept-under-the-rug, forbidden subject as it once was. Globally. There are ongoing preventive initiatives as well as awareness and educational activities conducted by various organisations. However, we are still a long way from celebrating significant progress in addressing mental health issues.

The National Suicide Registry of Malaysia recorded an increase in male suicides in 2019. It found that while Malaysian women reported higher levels of depression and anxiety, men were found to be three times more likely to commit suicide.

A World Health Organisation (WHO) report in 2020 noted that, within the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the global prevalence of depression and anxiety increased by 25 percent.

In a statement released by the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), our nation recorded an increase of 81 percent in suicide cases between 2020 and 2021.

In 2022, the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) revealed that the life expectancy for men in Malaysia had dropped to 70.8 years.

Despite numerous efforts, why are we still facing these bone-chilling numbers? Why is it important to emphasise men's mental health? We spoke to Dr Roland Victor, Medical Doctor at KL Sky Clinic cum influencer and entrepreneur to shed some light on men's role in mental health conversations.

1Twenty80:

WHY IS IT TOUGHER FOR MEN TO OPEN UP ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS THAN WOMEN? DO HORMONES OR EVOLUTION PLAY A ROLE?

Dr Roland Victor:

I would say that evolution and hormones are both important. When we look at evolution, men were active hunter-gatherers. They ventured outside their homes to hunt, fish, and forage for wild vegetation. In order to defend their families from harm, they had to fight off

predators. When the competition was fierce, the weak often could not catch up.

Women, on the other hand, are nurturers by nature. In the absence of their male counterparts, women stayed indoors and focused on homemaking and taking care of the group. Women also frequently socialised together. Their motherly instincts are greatly influenced by their oestrogen levels.

On the modern battlefield, men are in a constant clash for successful careers, happy relationships, and families. The stakes are higher, no thanks to societal expectations and various factors that further exacerbate the conditions. Hence, the male ego of denying defeat could be the very reason why men are reluctant to shed a tear or expose their weakness. It's the survival of the fittest.

> TELLING MEN TO "MAN UP", "DON'T ACT LIKE A GIRL", AND "BE MORE MACHO" DEPRIVES MEN OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO FEEL EMOTIONS, TO TAKE THINGS EASY AND TO PUT THEMSELVES FIRST.

1Twenty80:

HOW DOES TOXIC MASCULINITY CONTRIBUTE TO MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH?

Dr Roland:

What we need to understand is that men are designed to provide. It's built into our instinct to do things the hard way, and that means we are in constant competition with other men.

That's why we tend to prove our worth through hard work. It's a necessary masculine trait to protect. This includes safekeeping the females, offspring, nation and so on.

Toxic masculinity opposes mental and physical health treatment, even when injured or emotionally struggling. Thus, ignoring the pain and pushing oneself to work harder and move forward is impractical and unhealthy.

Telling men to "man up", "don't act like a girl", and "be more macho" deprives men of the opportunity to feel emotions, to take things easy and to put themselves first.

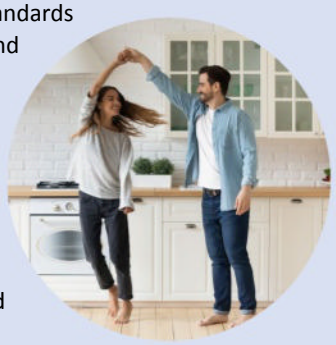
1Twenty80:

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TYPICAL STRESSORS IN MEN?

Dr Roland:

One of the greatest stressors for men is living up to society's expectations and gaining acceptance from that very society. Consider the criteria a woman seeks in a life partner as an example. Most would expect a man to have a successful career and a lot of money. A man should also own assets, mainly a car and a house.

That, however, does not guarantee a romantic partner's agreement to marriage. A man is expected to fit male beauty standards like being tall and having a deep voice. Some of these expectations may vary depending on culture, family background and socioeconomic status.



As a result, trying to accommodate these expectations into one's daily life can be a significant challenge for anyone. It is more difficult for men since we tend to hide our vulnerabilities and failings. Without meeting these standards, men will unfortunately lose society's acceptance.

SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN MEN

While many signs and symptoms are universal, some are more common in men than they are in women. Here are some things you should look out for in a male friend or family member:

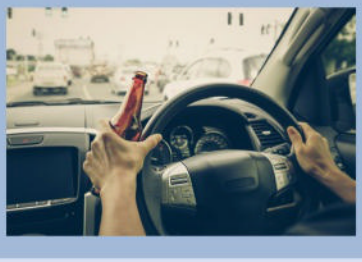
- Substance abuse.

- Anger and irritability.

- Working obsessively.

- Sleep problems.

- Reckless behaviour.



1Twenty80:

WHAT ARE SOME STEREOTYPICAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MEN?

Dr Roland:

First and foremost, the stereotypical assumption about men is their physical appearance. Men are often expected to be bigger and mightier by nature. These characteristics are seen as parallel to strength.

1Twenty80:

HOW CAN MEN TAKE THE FIRST STEP IN DEALING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES?

Dr Roland:

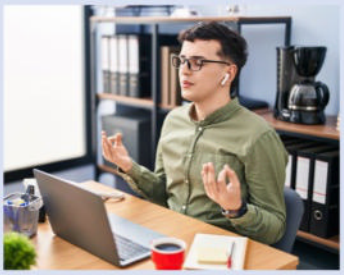
Men have to start interacting again with each other. The world's schedule today is going to work, returning home, taking care of the kids and doing it all over again. We hardly meet friends in social settings like gyms or even local eateries.

Men need to talk to men because only they can fully understand the nuances of being male. I believe that by interacting openly with each other and not viewing the other man as a competition at work or in a relationship, men will be able to relieve some amount of stress via healthy avenues.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE NEEDS HELP?

Firstly, acknowledge the problem. Next, try out these methods:

- Relaxation techniques like breathing exercises and meditations to help you feel calmer and more relaxed if you're struggling with high levels of anxiety.



- Get out and actively exercise by brisk walking, playing badminton or futsal to help release positive endorphins.

- Cut down on perilous habits like drinking and smoking.
- Stay social with family members, work buddies and like-minded peers.
- Seek professional treatment by reaching out to licensed experts or call
  - Malaysian Mental Health Association: 03-2780 6803
  - Befrienders Kuala Lumpur: 03-7627 2929

1Twenty80:

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR MEN TO HELP MEN TACKLE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES?

Dr Roland:

Men are less emotional and constrictive, basically. It's easy for men to express their stress with other male partners, as they are able to discuss their issues in a more logical way rather than being emotional about the issue.

1Twenty80:

HOW CAN A FATHER TEACH HIS SON ABOUT THE RIGHT APPROACHES TO MENTAL HEALTH?

Dr Roland:

Fathers need to catch up to the era of their sons in order to talk to them. I think it's important for fathers to not compare their past struggles with their sons' current ordeals.

While there could be some similarities in both their experiences, it's essential that both father and son have a mutual understanding of each other. That is how you work towards bridging generational gaps and also have fruitful dialogues about your shared views, opinions and experiences. So, learn the language of the present.

1Twenty80:

AS A MAN, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER MEN?

Dr Roland:

From what I see, some men have a materialistic mindset. They equate success with possessing material things. This is most definitely a distraction that's blinding them to other forms of success. Building your physical strength, developing your core beliefs and other aspects of your life are far more worthy forms of success. I hope that men will focus more on these areas.

BUILDING YOUR PHYSICAL STRENGTH, DEVELOPING YOUR CORE BELIEFS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE ARE FAR MORE WORTHY FORMS OF SUCCESS.

Sources: Department of Statistics Malaysia, Priory Health UK, National Suicide Registry Malaysia, World Health Organisation, Royal Malaysia Police, Medical News Today, Harvard Business Review

DEEP DOWN, I WISH...

Four men tell us what they wish they can talk about more freely:

I grew up an angry kid. Staying silent about my trauma made me temperamental and I never understood why. I wish I could just tell someone how I feel without getting judged. – *Amos, 22*

I wish men would feel more comfortable discussing the pressures and difficulties they face at work. Although we are constantly expected to be hardworking providers, it can get mentally challenging for us. – *Andrew, 56*

I wish I could talk about my emotions more freely without being judged or stereotyped as a weak male individual. – *Jason, 36*

Not all men are big, tall and strong. A lot of us are discriminated against because we don't 'look and sound' manly. I wish I wasn't rejected for leadership roles in school and college because of who I am. – *Ivan, 18* ■

AN ITCH TO DITCH

What should you do if your private area itches?

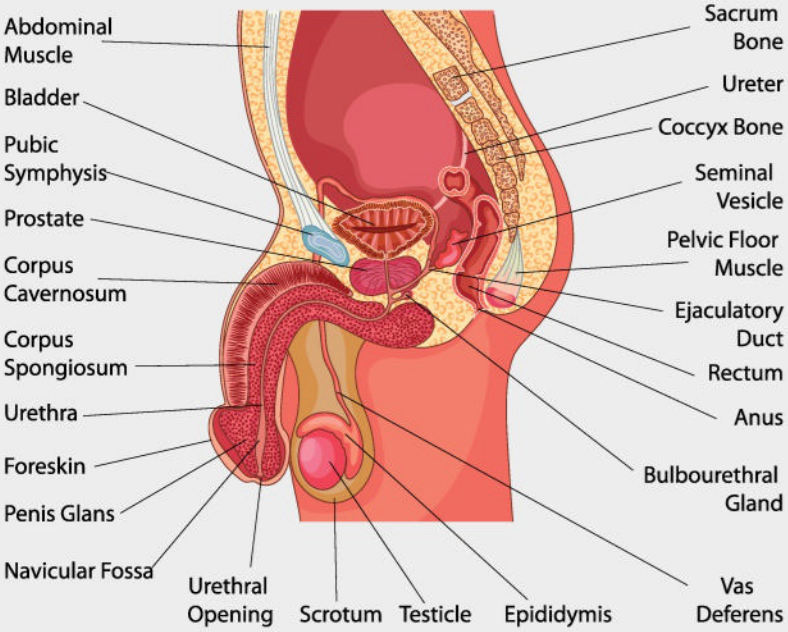
By Isabel Andrew

The last place you want an itch to happen is on your crotch. What else can be more uncomfortable than an itch that's a little hard to reach and you wouldn't want to be caught scratching? While it's understandable to think of hygiene as the reason, it may just be more than that.

Discover the hard facts of an itching penis. Plus, it's always better to be equipped with information as that will help you identify a problem the minute it comes your way. Read on and don't forget to share helpful information with your friends too.

ANATOMY OF THE MALE GENITALS

Before uncovering the truth about an itchy penis, let's look over the anatomy of the male genitals. The parts of the penis are the base, shaft, glans, and foreskin. The tissues that make up the penis include the dorsal nerve, blood vessels, connective tissue, and erectile tissue (corpus cavernosum and corpus spongiosum). The urethra passes from the bladder to the tip of the penis.



WHAT COULD CAUSE AN ITCH?

You may feel itchiness all over your penis or on the main parts like the shaft or tip. This could be because of:

CANDIDIASIS

Candidiasis also known as male thrush is a fungal infection that can inflame the penis tip and cause itching. Sometimes, a blotchy rash, burning, redness or thick white discharge may accompany the itching.

GENITAL WARTS

Genital warts are a sexually transmitted infection (STI) brought on by the human papillomavirus (HPV). It can appear on the shaft and tip as growths or lumps and may cause itching or bleeding during intercourse.

PSORIASIS

Psoriasis is a skin condition that causes the skin to appear flushed, flaky, and scaly. On the penis, psoriasis may appear as flushed patches on the shaft and tip.

SCABIES

Scabies occurs when mites burrow into the skin. It can take over the whole body and cause an extreme itching sensation. Scabies may appear on the penis as small raised bumps on the shaft.

CONTACT DERMATITIS

Contact dermatitis occurs when the skin comes into contact with something that causes it to have an allergic reaction. In the case of the penis, it may be a latex condom, soaps and fabrics and leaves raised and itchy bumps.

GENITAL HERPES

Genital herpes is another STI caused by the herpes simplex virus (HSV). This virus can lie dormant in the body for years until it starts itching and forming blisters on the shaft of the penis, the anus and the thighs.

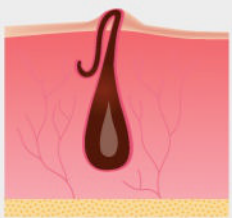
ECZEMA

Eczema is a condition that causes the skin to become dry, inflamed, and itchy. Eczema on the penis may appear on the shaft as dry skin.

BALANITIS

Balanitis is a form of skin irritation that specifically affects the tip of the penis. Symptoms of balanitis include an itchy penis, a foul smell coming from the penis, swelling and pain during urination.

INGROWN HAIR



An ingrown hair occurs when the tip of a pubic hair folds back into the skin. This commonly occurs after shaving or waxing, producing a soft bump or a painful blister.

RELIEVING AN ITCHY PENIS

It's highly recommended to visit a doctor who might examine the affected area for changes in the:

- Colour (red, white, brown).
- Texture (thickening).
- Surface abnormalities (dryness, scales).

You can also see a pharmacist for some over-the-counter (OTC) treatment recommendations like:

- Antifungal medication.
- Antibiotics.
- Antihistamines.
- Steroid ointments.

Try soothing the itch with these home remedies:

- Place a cool compress on the affected area to ease irritation.
- Refrain from sexual activity to avoid further irritation and prevent STIs.
- Apply coconut oil to the affected area to improve skin conditions and itchiness.
- Soak a cotton swab with alcohol and rub it on the affected area to kill off bacteria.
- Bathe in bath salts to relieve irritated skin and reduce inflammation.

PREVENTING AN ITCHY PENIS

Prevention is certainly better than cure. So here are some preventive measures to consider:

- Avoid perfumed soaps that irritate the penis.
- Maintain good hygiene by taking regular showers, thoroughly rinsing soap from the penis, and drying well afterwards.
- Clean the foreskin to clean dirt and bacteria that may lead to irritation and itching.
- Using barrier methods during sexual activity such as condoms during sex.
- Change your shaving habits by using a lubricant, replacing blunt razors and refraining from shaving an area multiple times in quick succession.
- Don't wear tight clothing and shower quickly after sweating.

Don't ignore persistent penile itching. Be sure to get it looked at because your penile health matters! ■

Sources: Man Matters, DoctorOnCall, Cleveland Clinic, Healthline, Medical News Today

Sitting is the new smoking

How to move more in a sedentary world

By Isabel Andrew

Have you tried keeping track of how long in a day you are glued to a seat? If you start with sitting through traffic, at work, during lunch, we're talking around 5 hours or more – and that's just half the day!

Did you know that too much of that comfy chair can be a real health buzzkill? Research reports that sitting is now the new smoking. Still don't believe? Come on, let's take a stroll with science.

How long is too long to sit still?

The Malaysian Public Health Physicians Association defines sedentary behaviour as having minimal movement and a very low level of energy expenditure.

Although there aren't any clear criteria for what a sedentary lifestyle is, researchers have developed a few different measurements to gauge it. One measure is the time an individual spends seated or reclining during their waking hours. Spending four to six waking hours sitting or lying down is considered sedentary.

Some researchers suggest that even those who adhere to the recommendation of the World Health Organisation — at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of intense activity each week — can still be considered sedentary if they spend four to six hours sitting or reclining per day.

How bad is a sedentary lifestyle?

Our bodies crave movement. Being sedentary only makes our muscles lazy and our circulation sluggish, creating a toxin buildup that fuels chronic diseases. Here's more on what happens to your mind and body when you rest for too long on that bean bag:

LEGS AND GLUTES (BUM MUSCLES)

The muscles on our legs and glutes are important for stabilising us when we walk. Sitting for long durations can lead to weakening and wasting away of these muscles. This will lead to high risks of injuring ourselves from falls and straining during exercises.

WEIGHT

Moving your muscles helps digest fats and sugars which aids overall metabolic health. If you spend a lot of time sitting, digestion becomes inefficient and all those fats and sugars retain as fat in your body.

HIPS AND BACK

The hip flexor muscles are a group of muscles toward the front of the hip, connecting your pelvis and legs. These muscles help you move your leg and knee. Sitting for too long causes the hip flexor muscles to shorten, leading to possible problems with your hip joints.

Your back is also a victim of the sitting syndrome, especially if you're seat isn't ergonomically designed. A poor posture may cause poor spine health such as compression in the spine discs and premature degeneration of the bones.

VARICOSE VEINS AND DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

Sitting for long periods causes blood to pool in your legs, leading to varicose veins or spider veins (a smaller version of varicose veins).

In severe and rare cases, it may also lead to blood clots forming deep vein thrombosis (DVT). If part of a blood clot in the vein breaks off, blood flow to other parts of the body could be cut off too. This includes your lungs, which can cause a pulmonary embolism and other fatal complications.

STIFF NECK AND SHOULDERS

It goes without saying that the longer you hunch over the computer keyboard, the more stiff and painful your neck and shoulder

CHRONIC HEALTH PROBLEMS

Studies have shown that people who are inactive and spend more time sitting or lying down, have an increased risk of chronic health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and even some cancers.

INFERTILITY

Studies also show that both women and men are susceptible to infertility by leading a sedentary lifestyle. This is because they are prone to becoming obese and overweight. They are also likely to develop diabetes and hypertension. All of these could result in poor-quality sperms and infrequent menses and ovulation periods.

MENTAL HEALTH

Prolonged sitting has been associated with poor cognitive function too. Those who live a sedentary lifestyle are most likely deprived of exercise and fitness.

It has been proven that exercise is able to reduce the body's stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol. It can also stimulate the production of mood-elevating hormones like endorphins.

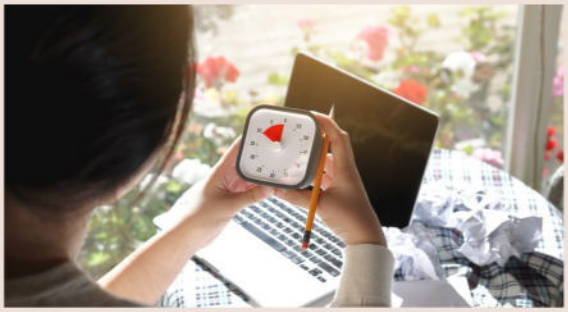
Hence, inactivity doesn't only fog up the brain, wane off concentration and hinder creativity and productivity, it may also lead to depression and anxiety.

How to move more in a sedentary world

"How can I move around if I'm working at my desk all day?"
"I have exams coming up, I can't move away from my table!"

If these are your groans, wheel them away. It's not too late to get active, here are a few ways to do it:

- When you're tidying up or bringing the groceries into the kitchen, put items away in small trips rather than taking them all together.
- Walk around when you're on the phone, but be sure to be quiet and not distracting.
- Rather than sitting down to read, listen to audiobooks and walk around.
- Stand on public transport, or get off one stop early and walk to your destination.
- Stand up while you read emails or reports.
- Move your rubbish bin away from your desk so you have to get up to throw anything away.
- Set a timer or fitness tracker to alert you to take a break, stand up, walk around or grab some water every 30 minutes.



- Sit on a medicine ball, which engages your core muscles and prevents you from slouching.
- Take a short walk around your residential area after dinner.
- Use commercial breaks as a chance to refill the popcorn bowl or go for a toilet break.
- Get competitive with a sibling or friend. See who can do the most pushups or situps in five minutes.
- Plant a garden, and maybe spend some time talking to your plants for some good vibes.

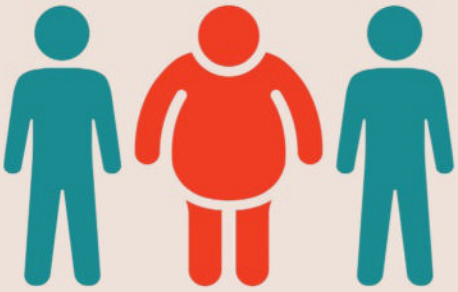
Remember, every small move counts, even if it's a funky chicken dance or a little wiggle while waiting for the microwave ding! However, remember to give your feet some rest too, because balance is key. Now, walk the talk and share with a friend or two. ■

Sources: World Health Organization, Malaysian Public Health Physicians Association, National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2022, Better Health Australia, Sanford Health, Mayo Clinic

HOW SEDENTARY ARE WE?

According to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2022, which studied eating habits and physical activity among Malaysian teens (aged 13-17):

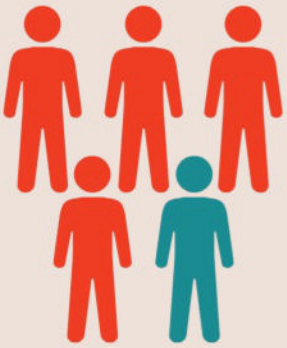
1 in 3
are overweight or obese

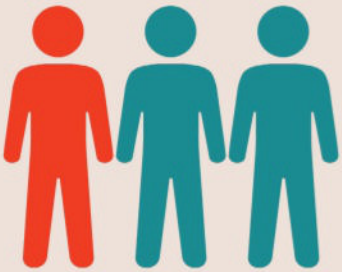


4 in 5
are physically inactive

2 in 3
lead sedentary lifestyles

4 in 5
don't eat enough fruits and vegetables





1 in 3
drink soft drinks daily

1 in 10
eat fast food at least 3 days per week

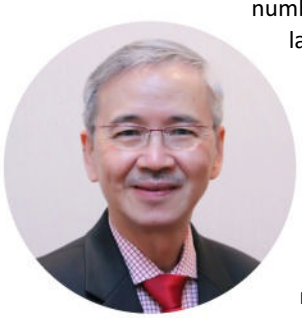
Understanding nutrition labels

Now you know what you're buying

By Isabel Andrew

When you go into a supermarket and grab a can of baked beans, what do you do next? Do you turn the can around and study it or does it go straight into your cart? Like it or not, most of us think the work is done once we've spotted the expiry date. What's more, we shop for food online.

If your aim is to eat healthily but can't seem to put together the numbers on the nutrition labels, we've got you! We spoke to Dr Tee E Siong, President of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia to further understand nutrition labels and how to read them. Happy learning!



1Twenty80:

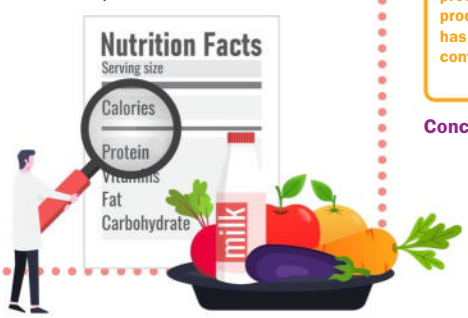
What's the difference between food labels and nutrition labels? Why is it important to read and understand them?

Dr Tee E Siong:

Many are not aware of the differences between food labels and nutrition labels. Here are some key differences:

- Put simply, food labels:
  - Are required by law to include specific information that describes the nature of the packaged food.
  - Such information includes:
    - Name of the product and its brand.
    - All the ingredients in the food (called ingredient listing).
    - The additives added to the food.
    - Minimum net weight or volume.
    - Expiry and manufacturing dates.
    - Name and address of the manufacturer or distributor.
  - All these information will assist consumers in making the right food choices.

- On the other hand, nutrition labels or Nutrition Information Panel (NIP):
  - Provide information on the nutrients contained in the product.
  - Such information includes:
    - Energy, carbohydrate, protein, and fat content.
    - Sugar content.
  - Besides nutrient content, nutrition labels also include front-of-pack (FOP) labelling:
    - Energy icon, which displays
      - Amount of energy (kcal) in one serving of the product.
      - Energy contributed by one serving of the product (%) of the average daily adult energy requirement (2000 kcal).
    - Healthier Choice Logo (HCL)
      - Is a logo awarded to foods and beverages that meet certain nutrient criteria set by the Ministry of Health and are deemed "healthier" within that category.
      - It can appear in red or black colour.
      - However, don't choose products solely based on the HCL logo. One should also refer to the NIP to determine the nutrient content in the product.



> ALWAYS BASE YOUR CHOICE ON THE NUMBER OF NUTRIENTS IN THE PRODUCT.

1Twenty80:

What are the steps to reading a nutrition label?

Dr Tee:

I would not call them steps, but rather, the various components of the nutrition label that consumers need to look out for.

How to use the Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) to compare the nutrient content of food products

1. When comparing similar foods of different brands, compare the energy and nutrient content in 100g or 100ml of the product.
2. By looking at 'per 100ml' column, product B provides higher calories. You can look at 'per serving' to know the total calories/energy you will get from one serving.
3. Product B, a flavoured milk, has higher total sugar, mostly because of added sugar. Product A contains only lactose, the natural sugar found in milk.

Product A (Fresh Milk)

Maklumat Pemakanan/Nutrition Information

6 **Saiz Hidangan/Serving: 300 ml**
Bilangan Hidangan/No. of Servings: 1

	1 Setiap/ Per 100ml	Setiap Hidangan/ Per Serving 300ml
2 Tenaga/Energy	66 kcal	198 kcal
Karbohidrat/ Carbohydrate	5.5 g	16.5 g
3 Jumlah Gula/Total Sugar	5.5 g	16.5 g
- Sukrosa/Sucrose	0.0 g	0.0 g
- Laktosa/Lactose	5.5 g	16.5 g
4 Protein/Protein	3.0 g	9.0 g
Lemak/Fat	3.5 g	10.5 g
Kalsium/Calcium	90 mg	270 mg
Vitamin B1	0.5 mg	1.5 mg
Vitamin B2	0.4 mg	1.2 mg
5 Vitamin B3	1.8 mg	5.4 mg
Vitamin D	1.4 µg	4.2 µg
Besi/Iron	1.0 mg	3.0 mg

Product B (Chocolate Milk)

Maklumat Pemakanan/Nutrition Information

6 **Saiz Hidangan/Serving: 250 ml**
Bilangan Hidangan/No. of Servings: 1

	1 Setiap/ Per 100ml	Setiap Hidangan/ Per Serving 250ml
2 Tenaga/Energy	89 kcal	223 kcal
Karbohidrat/ Carbohydrate	9.0 g	22.5 g
3 Jumlah Gula/Total Sugar	9.0 g	22.5 g
- Sukrosa/Sucrose	5.5 g	13.8 g
- Laktosa/Lactose	3.5 g	8.8 g
4 Protein/Protein	3.0 g	7.5 g
Lemak/Fat	4.5 g	11.3 g
Kalsium/Calcium	95 mg	238 mg
Vitamin B1	0.5 mg	1.3 mg
Vitamin B2	0.4 mg	1.0 mg
5 Vitamin B3	1.5 mg	3.8 mg
Vitamin D	1.2 µg	3.0 µg
Besi/Iron	1.5 mg	3.8 mg

4. Both products have the same content of protein but product B has higher fat content.
5. Compare the content of other nutrients such as the vitamins and minerals. There are slight differences on the content of vitamins and minerals in products A & B.
6. It is NOT appropriate to compare nutrient information based on the serving size because different products may use different serving sizes, as indicated in this example. Nevertheless, information in the column for serving size is also useful as it indicates the amount of energy and nutrients in 250 ml or 300 ml or approximately a glass of the beverage.

Conclusion: **Choose a product that meets your energy and nutrient requirements, whether you need more or less of certain nutrients. Always base your choice on a number of nutrients contained in the product.**

It's always important to choose a product that meets your energy and nutrient requirements, whether you need more or less of certain nutrients.

1Twenty80:

Could you elaborate on some nutrition content claims that we often see on our food and drinks?

Dr Tee:

There are a few types of nutrition claims that highlight the levels of nutrients and their functions in packaged food:

- **CONTENT CLAIM** – describes the level of nutrients like low in sugar, high in protein.
- **COMPARATIVE CLAIM** – compares the level of energy/nutrient between similar products like lower fat, and higher calcium.
- **FUNCTION CLAIM** – describes the function of specific nutrients like calcium helps in bone formation.

Organic/natural

The claim for "organic" foods is only permitted for use on products that have been produced according to certain criteria required for organic farming. Thus, companies can't simply place the claim or logo on their labels. These have to be certified by the Ministry of Health Malaysia prior to being approved.

The word natural is only permitted for certain foods under the Food Regulations Malaysia 1985. One such food is natural mineral water.

No added sugar

Companies may make this claim on their packaged food if they did not add any types of sugar or any ingredients containing sugar to their products. However, it must be noted that these products may contain natural sugars.

No added preservatives

For products that may be permitted to be added with preservatives, but do not add these additives, then such a claim is allowed to be displayed.

Fresh

There are no specific provisions for foods to claim they are "fresh". Such claims are not permitted unless for specific foods in the regulations.

Gluten-free

There is a specific regulation on gluten-free claims. This claim comes with a specific regulation, the products must contain very low amounts of gluten, i.e. less than 0.002 g per 100 g of the food.

Low-calorie

This claim can only be made for products that contain less than 40 kcal per 100 g of food or 20 kcal per 100 ml for beverages. Products may also claim "energy-free" if it contains less than 4 kcal per 100 g or per 100 ml.

Low-fat

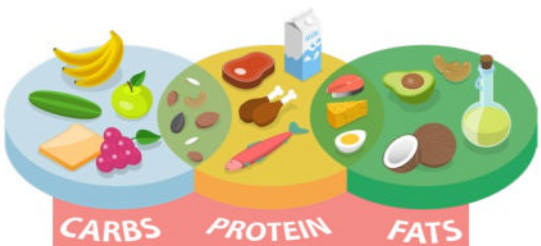
Foods can only claim to be low in fat if they contain less than 3 g fat per 100 g (for solid foods) or less than 1.5 g per ml (for beverages). For fat-free claims, foods must contain less than 0.15 g per ml for solid foods or beverages.

1Twenty80:

What are macronutrients? Could you give some examples?

Dr Tee:

Macronutrients are protein, fat, and carbohydrate. They are required in gram quantities per day.



Macronutrients include carbohydrates, protein, and fat. It's called 'macro' because it's needed in relatively larger amounts than other nutrients. Although there are recommended ranges for macronutrient intake, your needs may vary based on personal circumstances.

1Twenty80:

What are micronutrients? Could you give some examples?

Dr Tee:

Micronutrients are needed in small amounts. Some examples include vitamins like vitamins A, B1, B2, and B3 as well as minerals like calcium, iron and zinc.

We must obtain micronutrients from food since our bodies are unable to produce vitamins and minerals. This is why they're also referred to as essential nutrients.

1Twenty80:

How can parents choose healthy baby foods?

Dr Tee:

The best food for babies is breast milk.

Toddlers are very much aware of changes in texture and shape. If a child dislikes a specific fruit, try alternative methods. You could cut it into different shapes, arrange it in a smiley face, or offer it in a smoothie. Don't be afraid to make food fun and creative.

> MICRONUTRIENTS ARE NEEDED IN SMALL AMOUNTS. SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE VITAMINS LIKE VITAMINS A, B1, B2, AND B3 AS WELL AS MINERALS LIKE CALCIUM, IRON AND ZINC.

1Twenty80:

How many calories should one consume daily? How can one choose foods that adhere to this amount?

Dr Tee:

How many calories a person needs depends on his or her age. And other factors, like body weight, fitness level etc.

According to the Recommended Nutrient Intakes for Malaysia 2005 by the National Coordinating Committee on Food and Nutrition of the Ministry of Health (MOH) Malaysia:

Age groups	Age	Energy (kcal)
Infants (boys)	0 – 5 months	560
Infants (girls)	0 – 5 months	550
Children (boys)	1 – 3 years	980
Children (girls)	1 – 3 years	910
Adolescent (boys)	10 – 12 years	2180
Adolescent (girls)	10 – 12 years	1990
Men	19 – 29 years	2440
Women	19 – 29 years	2000
Pregnancy	1st-trimester	+ 0
	2nd-trimester	+ 360
	3rd trimester	+ 470

The table on MOH's website dives deeper into the various essential nutrients and how much should we be consuming.

1Twenty80:

What does Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) mean? Are there risks?

Dr Tee:

GMO refers to an organism in which the genetic material has been changed through modern biotechnology so that it does not occur naturally by multiplication, natural recombination, or both. The food regulations in Malaysia do permit the sale of GMOs. With that being said, the industry must apply to MOH for permission to sell such products. There are specific labelling requirements for GMOs. Upon approval by MOH, we can say that the product bears no health risks.

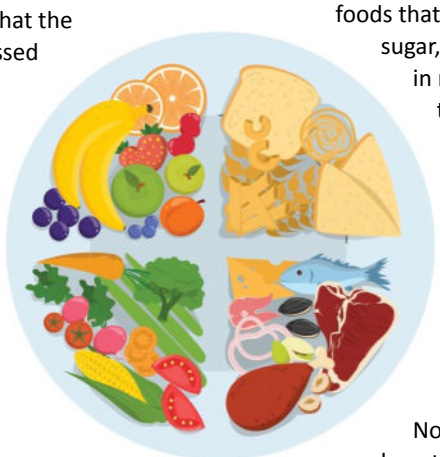
1Twenty80:

There is a common belief that an ingredient list that is longer than two to three lines suggests that the product is highly processed. What are your thoughts?

Dr Tee:

One cannot just look at the number of ingredients and say that the product is highly processed and is not safe for consumption. There is no scientific basis supporting this claim

Many of the dishes and meals in coffee shops, cafes and restaurants, are high in fat, sugar and salt. They also lack fibre and whole grains. The same goes for some ready-to-eat meals. Yet, these are the foods we tend to eat more because they are ubiquitous and our go-to options.



We should rely more on fresh foods but that does not mean that processed foods are not healthy and should not be consumed. They do have a role to play. It is up to us to choose the right types of processed foods.

Consumers should pay more attention to the nutritional content of the food, rather than whether it is processed or not. We need to reduce the intake of foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt. Eating in moderation, taking balanced meals (with the main food groups), and eating a variety of different foods should also be on our list.

Now that you know how to read nutrition labels, we hope your next shopping trip wouldn't be more productive and healthier! ■

1Twenty80:

What is Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)? Are there any side effects?

Dr Tee:

MSG is a type of food additive, a flavouring substance. It is permitted by the Food Regulations Malaysia, meaning there are no safety concerns if consumed in the recommended amounts.

Sources: Nutrition Month Malaysia He-Al Volume 1-4, Ministry of Health Malaysia, Healthline, Medical News Today

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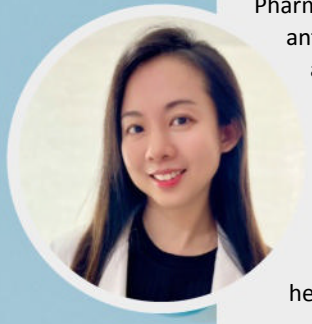
ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

A pharmacist's insights into antibiotic resistance

By Yasanthi Devi

Antibiotic resistance is a growing concern in the field of healthcare, posing a significant threat to global public health. As bacteria evolve and adapt, they develop mechanisms to survive the effects of antibiotics, rendering these medications less effective or completely ineffective. This phenomenon has far-reaching implications.



Pharmacists play a vital role in addressing antibiotic resistance by promoting appropriate antibiotic use and educating patients. In this interview, we will speak with a pharmacist to gain insights into antibiotic resistance and learn about the pharmacist's perspective on this critical issue. Jerhne Chew Mei Cheng, the Director and Pharmacist of Smiles Pharmacy Sdn Bhd is here to share her insights on this topic.

1Twenty80:

WHAT IS ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE AND THE STORY BEHIND IT?

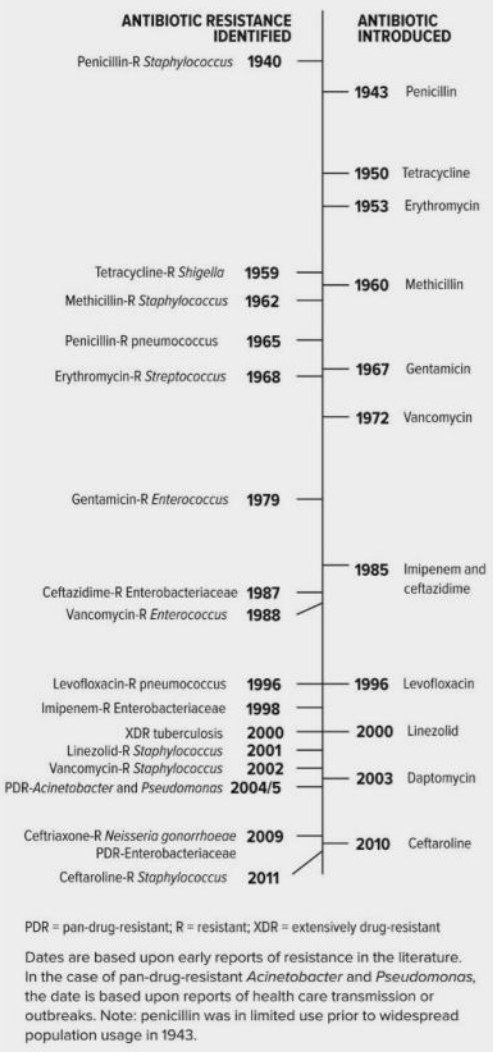
Jerhne Chew:

The first antibiotic in the world, 'penicillin', was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming in 1928. In the 1940s, penicillin was first prescribed to treat serious infections. During World War II, penicillin saved the lives of many soldiers who were down with bacterial infections (Sengupta S et al., 2013). However, penicillin-resistant bacteria emerged in the 1950s, threatening the lives of many. This led to the crucial discovery of new beta-lactam antibiotics to overcome the problem of penicillin-resistant bacteria (Spellberg B and Gilbert DN, 2014). Many antibiotics have later been developed and managed to save millions of lives.

Unfortunately, antibiotic resistance began to develop, affecting nearly all clinically used antibiotics and the lack of new drug discovery to solve the resistance issue has crippled the healthcare system (refer to figure 1) (C. Lee Ventola, 2015). In 2015, bacterial infections returned to become a serious threat to the healthcare industry.

"Survival of the fittest" is the phenomenon whereby the occurrence of genetic plasticity of bacterial pathogens leads to new acquisition of genetic material, bacterial mutational adaptations, and modification of gene expression, making these "superbugs" bacteria resistant to many antibiotics in clinical settings. In short, these "superbug" bacteria cannot be killed by antibiotics. In early 1945, Sir Alexander Fleming had pre-warned and foreseen the abuse of antibiotics use (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013).

Figure 1 Developing Antibiotic Resistance: A Timeline of Key Events[5]



PDR = pan-drug-resistant; R = resistant; XDR = extensively drug-resistant

Dates are based upon early reports of resistance in the literature. In the case of pan-drug-resistant *Acinetobacter* and *Pseudomonas*, the date is based upon reports of health care transmission or outbreaks. Note: penicillin was in limited use prior to widespread population usage in 1943.

(C.Lee Ventola, 2015)

1Twenty80:

IS ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE PREVALENT?

Jerhne:

Multidrug-resistant organisms are rising not only in hospital settings but also in community environments. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has coined antibiotic resistance as one of the three most dominant public health threats of the 21st century [WHO,2014]. Some epidemiological studies have shown that the emergence and spreading of antimicrobial-resistant strains are higher in areas where antibiotics are widely used (The antibiotic alarm, 2013). The worst bacteria-resistant infections are coming from gram-negative bacteria such as Enterobacteriaceae (commonly being the extended-spectrum-β-lactamase producing Klebsiella pneumoniae), Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Acinebacter, followed by Escherichia coli and Neisseria gonorrhoeae (Rossolini GM et.al., 2014).

1Twenty80:

HOW DOES ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE HAPPEN?

Jerhne:

Antibiotic resistance has been a normal phenomenon since the olden days. Many antimicrobials are naturally produced molecules that exist in our environment. Bacteria need to evolve in order to survive from these naturally occurring antimicrobials. This makes such bacteria intrinsically resistant to one or more antimicrobials. However, the main issue now is that many bacterias which are originally susceptible to certain antimicrobials are found to have developed resistance toward the same antimicrobials.

Antibiotic resistance may arise from chromosomal gene mutations. The antibiotic-resistant genes can also be inherited from the bacteria's relatives or transferred from non-relatives via mobile genetic elements like plasmids. Such horizontal gene transfer enables antibiotic resistance to be passed on to different species of bacteria. According to the law of natural selection, the resistant bacteria would be left behind to reproduce as the antibiotics have eliminated those which are susceptible to antimicrobials. Hence, the fittest "superbug" survived (Read AF and Woods RJ, 2014).

1Twenty80:

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES BEHIND ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Jerhne:

Commercialised and routine use of antibiotics in modern medicine has led to the evolution of Multidrug-resistant organisms. The lack of antibiotics regulation in some countries has made antibiotics easily accessible over the counter without a prescription. Some patients can even buy them online in unlimited quantities, leading to the overuse of antibiotics (Michael CA et. al., 2014).

Wrongly prescribed antibiotics play a major role in promoting antibiotic resistance (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). Often antibiotics were prescribed when they were not needed in the first place. Studies showed that in 30 to 50 percent of cases, the duration of antibiotic therapy was incorrect. Some antibiotic choices were inappropriate to treat a certain infection while some antibiotic doses given were suboptimal or subtherapeutic (Luyt CE et.al., 2014). All these not only cause antibiotic resistance, they unnecessarily expose patients to the side effects of antibiotic therapy (Lushniak BD, 2014).

Not many pharmaceutical industries are keen on developing new antimicrobial drugs due to the economic crisis-induced cut in funding and rigid regulatory requirements (Gould Im and Bal Am, 2013)(Piddock LJ, 2012). 15 out of 18 largest pharmaceutical companies have stopped producing antibiotics (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013). More funding is being channeled to make more profitable drugs that treat chronic diseases like diabetes, gastroesophageal reflux, psychiatric disorders, asthma, and chemotherapy drugs (Gould Im and Bal Am, 2013). Moreover, due to the global rise in antibiotic resistance crisis, microbiologists and infectious disease, control experts are against antibiotic use, making it the“last resort” drug to treat serious illnesses. Thus, pharmaceutical companies will be expecting a very slow return on investment, making the development of new antibiotics seem unattractive (Piddock LJ, 2012). To make things worse, bacteria that are resistant to this new antibiotic would emerge very quickly, making the sales and profits of the new antibiotics very short-lived (Gould Im and Bal Am, 2013).

Moreover, the loss of patency on inventor drugs allows the shifting of sales to cheaper generic drugs (Wright GD, 2014), which makes the manufacturing of antibiotics even more unfavorable. In the last 20 years, U.S. FDA has made various changes to the clinical trial requirements, making the development of the antibiotic non-economical attractive (Piddock LJ, 2012). The extensive antibiotics use in agriculture further worsen the antibiotic resistance crisis. 80 percent of antibiotics sold in the US are being fed to livestock to promote growth, improve the quality of health and avoid infections (Gross M, 2013). The antibiotics kill or suppress susceptible bacteria in the livestock, leaving behind those antibiotic-resistant bacteria. When humans consume this livestock, the resistant bacteria will be passed on to humans, leading to infections and negative health complications (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013). The overuse of antibiotics on livestock may disrupt the environmental microbiome. Almost 90 percent of antibiotics fed to the livestock were found in their urine and stool which further contaminated the underground water and fertilizers (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013).

Antibiotics such as tetracycline and streptomycin are used as pesticides for fruit trees, this affects the environmental ecology by allowing the survival of more resistant bacteria over susceptible bacteria (Golkar Z et.al., 2014). Being too clean by over-sanitizing may prevent kids and adults from developing natural immunity to environmental antigens. This reduced immune system versatility may increase morbidity and mortality in future exposure to infections (Michael CA et. al., 2014).

1Twenty80:

ARE THERE ANY CONSEQUENCES OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Jerhne:

MDR (multi-drug resistant)-organisms-induced infections bring a higher mortality rate compared to those by susceptible bacteria. Data analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States reported an estimated 23,000 deaths annually due to MDR infections. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013).

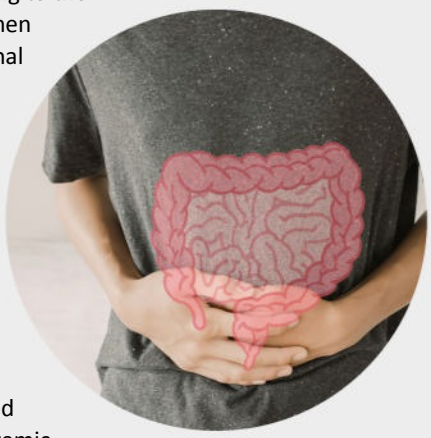
Another review suggested that in 2050, the death rate may shoot up to 300 million, with a loss of close to $100 trillion to the world economy [The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance. 2014]. Things are only going to get worse if there is no more new and effective antimicrobial to combatthese MDR organisms. Patients can only be left untreatable and ultimately die from infections.

The spike in antibiotic resistance increases the financial burden on the healthcare system, the patients, and their families.

Patients who develop antibiotic-resistant infections tend to stay longer in hospitals (6.4 days vs 12.7 days), have higher doctor visits, are given more toxic (risk of kidney dysfunction) (Levin AS et.al., 1999) and expensive antibiotics, take longer to recover and at higher risk of long term disability (Golkar Z et.al., 2014).

> THE SPIKE IN ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE INCREASES THE FINANCIAL BURDEN ON THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, THE PATIENTS, AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Patients who are chronic users of antibiotics stand a higher chance of harboring antibiotic-resistant bacteria. The chronic use of antibiotics disrupts gut-protective microflora, leading to the development of leaky gut syndrome. When an individual has a leaky gut, the intestinal barrier is very permeable which allows toxic compounds to get in the blood, causing organ and system dysfunction. In the long run, leaky gut patients may develop auto-immunity, massive allergies, heart issues, cancer, recurrent infections, and many more (Ricardo SA et.al., 2023). Uncontrolled or prolonged use of antibiotics may also lead to gut dysbiosis whereby some good bacterial species are being removed or reduced by antibiotics, leading to systemic inflammation.



1Twenty80:

IS ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE CONTAGIOUS?

Jerhne:

Antibiotic resistance is not contagious. Some people hardly take antibiotics, their focus is solely on building strong inner immunity that helps them to fight most infections.

1Twenty80:

WHO IS AT RISK OF DEVELOPING ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Jerhne:

Individuals who are chronic users of antibiotics will stand a higher chance of developing antibiotic resistance. When a person's immunity is low, he or she will tend to fall sick easily. Often, antibiotics will be given to resolve an infection. The high frequency of falling sick and antibiotics consumption eventually lead to higher chances of getting antibiotic resistance.

1Twenty80:

WHEN ARE ANTIBIOTICS NECESSARY?

Jerhne:

Antibiotics are only needed when actual pathogens are identified via blood tests, urine, or feces cultures. Many times, antibiotics were prescribed as broad-spectrum treatment without confirming the existence of pathogens. This can be seen from a study done in the U.S. whereby pathogen was only found in 7.6 percent of 17435 patients hospitalized with community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013).

1Twenty80:

ARE THERE WAYS TO REDUCE OR PREVENT ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Jerhne:

Firstly, cut down on the unnecessary use of antibiotics. The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) has proposed the rollout of "limited-population antibiotic drugs (LPAD)" whereby only small, cost-effective, and faster clinical trials will be needed to develop such antibiotics. Upon regulatory approval, LPAD will only be used on high-risk patients who will greatly benefit from the drug (Bartlett JG et.al., 2013). Proper diagnosis, blood tests, and patient history taking need to be done to render the need for antibiotics use.

Secondly, focus on strengthening the inner immunity to fight against infections. Repair leaky gut. A healthy gut will be able to defend against intruding bad microorganisms. This may lead to a better immunity against infections, minimizing the need to use antibiotics. The leaky gut syndrome can be repaired by taking a good diet that consists of low fats, and avoiding sugars, additives, and ultra-processed foods. Proper supplementation of probiotics/prebiotics, arginine, glutamine, polyphenols, vitamins, fibers, medical herbs, edible mushrooms, and fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides, and polyols are found to repair leaky gut and increase intestinal immunity (Ricardo SA et.al., 2023). Taking a healthy, Mediterranean or plant-based diet helps to strengthen immunity against infections.

"FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING THE INNER IMMUNITY TO FIGHT AGAINST INFECTIONS. REPAIR LEAKY GUT. A HEALTHY GUT WILL BE ABLE TO DEFEND AGAINST INTRUDING BAD MICROORGANISMS. THIS MAY LEAD TO A BETTER IMMUNITY AGAINST INFECTIONS, MINIMIZING THE NEED TO USE ANTIBIOTICS."

Good and proper supplementation could help in boosting one's immunity. Some nutraceuticals such as propolis, ionic silver, black seed, and garlic work very well as antibacterial and antiviral. Nutrients that help in reducing oxidative stress such as superfood extracts, and super antioxidants extract are powerful supplements that could speed up healing and tame cellular inflammation. Nevertheless, doing anaerobic and aerobic exercises at least 3 times a week, meditation, and breathing exercises work wonders in immune boosting too. Lastly, better new policies and research efforts should be implemented to encourage new antimicrobial drug development (Spellberg B and Gilbert DN, 2014).

Antibiotic resistance is a global crisis that will need combined efforts from the pharmaceutical research team, policymakers, healthcare system, and patients. More focus should be given to developing natural immunity, and strengthening our own immune system to make it more versatile against invading pathogens instead of relying solely on antibiotics. There are many effective and powerful antimicrobial compounds from nature, always ensuring your immunity is at its optimal and it will take care of any infections for you! ■

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UNLEASH YOUR ENERGY

Mastering the art of sustained vitality

By Yasanthi Devi

In today's fast-paced world, maintaining optimal energy levels throughout the day is essential for productivity, focus, and overall well-being. If you find yourself frequently drained or struggling to keep up with the demands of your day, fear not! This article will serve as your comprehensive guide to unlocking the secrets of lasting energy. From effective dietary choices to strategic lifestyle adjustments, we'll explore practical strategies that will empower you to keep your energy levels soaring from sunrise to sunset.

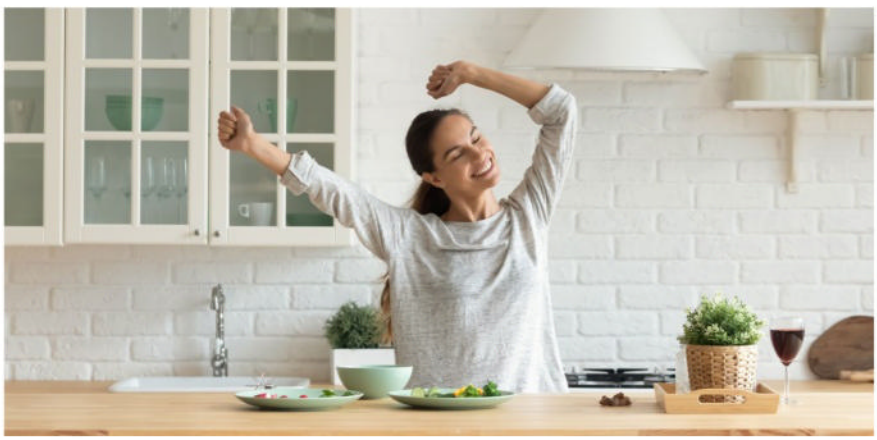
Before you soar...

FUEL UP WITH A BALANCED BREAKFAST

Start your day right by nourishing your body with a balanced breakfast. Incorporate whole foods rich in complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and healthy fats. This combination provides sustained energy release, keeping you fueled throughout the morning.

Be mindful when consuming food with:

- Added sugars
- Artificial sweeteners
- Salt
- Trans fats
- Preservatives
- Artificial colors



HEALTHY MALAYSIAN BREAKFAST OPTIONS

Malaysia is a melting pot of diverse cultures, traditions and food. Malaysians are not only known for their passion for supporting our local sports team, but we also love our food as it's an integral part of our lives! With that in mind, here are some healthy Malaysian delicacies that make good breakfast choices.

A piece of roti canai with gravy (322 kcal)

A piece of plain thosai with gravy (275 kcal)

Two pieces of kaya toast and 'kopi o' with sugar (448 kcal)

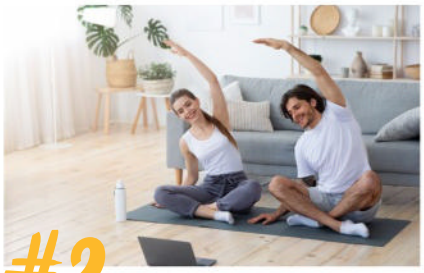
Mee goreng or fried noodles (one packet) (470 kcal)

Mee goreng Siam or Siamese Fried Noodles (One packet) (395 kcal)

CHECKLIST TO SOAR WITH ENERGY

#1 HYDRATION FOR VITALITY

Don't underestimate the power of hydration! Make it a habit to drink an adequate amount of water throughout the day (8 glasses a day is a good start!). Proper hydration helps prevent fatigue, supports cognitive function, and promotes overall vitality.



#2 ENERGISING MOVEMENTS

Engage in simple physical activities to boost your energy levels. Exercise increases blood flow, releases endorphins, and enhances overall well-being. Find out various exercises or activities that you enjoy and make them a part of your daily routine.

#3 THE POWER OF POWER NAPS

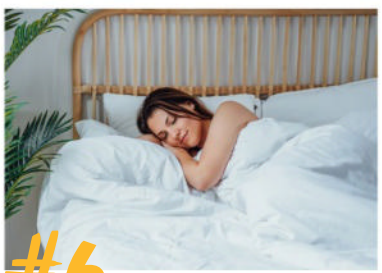
Embrace the rejuvenating power of power naps. Studies have shown that short, strategic naps can enhance alertness, improve cognitive function, and recharge your energy levels. Learn the art of power napping and discover the ideal duration (Hint! It's 20-25 minutes) and timing for maximum effectiveness.

#4 SNACK SMART FOR SUSTAINED ENERGY

Choose healthy snacks that provide a combination of complex carbohydrates, fiber, and protein. Opt for nutrient-dense options such as fruits, nuts, yogurt, or whole-grain snacks. These choices provide a gradual energy release and help curb hunger between meals.

#5 STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION

Chronic stress can drain your energy. Implement stress management techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, and time management strategies. By reducing stress levels, you can preserve and sustain your energy throughout the day.



#6 QUALITY SLEEP FOR REJUVENATION

Prioritise sleep and establish a consistent sleep routine. Create a relaxing environment conducive to quality sleep by ensuring a comfortable mattress, minimising distractions, and avoiding stimulants before bedtime. Aim for the recommended hours of sleep based on your age group.

By implementing these strategies into your daily routine, you can unlock a world of boundless energy and vitality. Embrace the power of balanced nutrition, hydration, physical activity, restorative breaks, stress management, quality sleep, and a positive mindset.

Remember, energy is not a finite resource but a renewable force waiting to be unleashed. With these tools in your arsenal, you'll embark on each day with sustained vitality and a zest for life. Get ready to unleash your energy and revel in the transformative impact it will have on your overall well-being. ■

Source: University of California San Francisco (Tips for staying healthy), Healthline, WebMD

Mummy Bra Shopping Simplified

What to know about busting out of your bras

By Isabel Andrew

Dear mummies, getting your hands on the perfect maternity and nursing bras should be at the top of your shopping list. That's because these brassieres are your best allies in adapting to your pregnancy and breastfeeding days. Read on for some tips for a blissful bra splurge.

Breast changes during pregnancy

Here are a few breast changes to expect during pregnancy:

- **BREAST GROWTH –** The breasts start to enlarge as early as six weeks into pregnancy.
- **HORMONAL EFFECTS –** Pregnancy hormones can lead to tender nipples and breasts, changes in nipple and areola colour and size, and expansion of the ribcage to accommodate the growing baby.
- **MILK PRODUCTION –** By the 16th week, the breasts can produce colostrum.

What's the difference between maternity bras and nursing bras?

Maternity bras and nursing bras serve distinct purposes during pregnancy and postpartum:

MATERNITY BRAS:

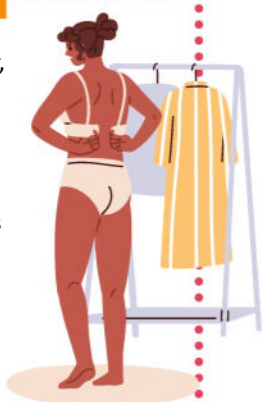
- Provides support and comfort to expectant mothers.
- Features padded straps and pliable cups to accommodate body changes.
- Buying maternity bras in the second trimester, once the cup size is more stable, is recommended.

NURSING BRAS:

- Provides support and comfort to nursing mothers.
- Features clasps or panels for convenient breastfeeding access.
- Buying nursing bras in the third trimester is recommended for a better fit. Add one cup size and one back size to your usual pre-pregnancy bra size.

Bonus tips

- Save your ringgit with a bra extender, which gives additional length and hooks to the back of your bra, extending the life of the bra.
- While underwire bras are acceptable during pregnancy, opt for softer cups to prevent discomfort and chafing.
- If your breasts feel heavy or if they need breast pads because of the leak, consider a crop top or a sleeping bra.



Comfort and confidence, bear these words in mind when you're looking at your options. Whether it's the snug fit for pregnancy or the ease of nursing, the right bras can make a world of difference.

Sources: WebMD, Parents.com, National Childbirth Trust UK

Nutrition Food for Hemodialysis and Peritoneal Dialysis Patients

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KIDNEY DIALYSIS 101

How does a machine substitute your kidneys?

By Isabel Andrew

At the mention of the words 'kidney dialysis', we can picture a patient with tubes taped to their hands. Those tubes travel to a box next to the patient and he or she will spend the next few hours in their seat. Anyone know more than that?

Besides filtering our blood, what else does kidney dialysis do? Who is it for and why do they need it?

We know you want these questions answered so we spoke to Dixon Kinson @ Benedict who is the Regional Dialysis Manager (East Malaysia) at the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) to understand what kidney dialysis is and how it works.

1Twenty80:

WHAT DOES KIDNEY DIALYSIS DO?

Dixon Kinson:

Dialysis removes waste products and excess fluid that accumulates in the blood when the kidneys fail. If not removed, these toxic materials are capable of making a person ill and frail.

1Twenty80:

WHO SHOULD GO FOR KIDNEY DIALYSIS?

Dixon:

You should start to consider dialysis if your kidney function drops to less than 10 percent. Due to the accumulation of excess waste products and water, you may be developing symptoms such as loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, lethargy, breathlessness or confusion.

1Twenty80:

HOW MANY TYPES OF KIDNEY DIALYSIS ARE THERE? HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

Dixon:

The two types of dialysis available are hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis. Both forms of treatment help remove excess fluid and waste products from the body. They are:

HEMODIALYSIS

In hemodialysis, blood is diverted from the body via a needle and a series of tubes into a filter. Here, the blood is cleaned and excess fluid and waste products are removed, before returning the blood back to the body via another needle and tube.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING HEMODIALYSIS?

During hemodialysis, the dialysis machine:

- Removes blood through a needle in the arm.
- Circulates the blood through the dialyser filter. The filter moves waste into a dialysis solution, which contains water, salt and other additives.
- Returns filtered blood to the body through a different needle.
- Monitors the blood pressure and adjusts how fast blood flows in and out of the body.

PERITONEAL DIALYSIS

In peritoneal dialysis, a specially formulated fluid is infused into the abdominal cavity. It is kept there for about 6 hours, during which excess fluids and waste products are absorbed from the body. After about 6 hours, the fluid is removed and a new batch of fluids is infused into the abdominal cavity.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING PERITONEAL DIALYSIS?

Our abdomen (the peritoneum) contains thousands of tiny blood vessels which makes it a useful filtering device like our kidneys.

So, during peritoneal dialysis:

- A catheter is connected to one branch of a Y-shaped tube. This tube connects to a bag that has a dialysis solution. The solution flows through the tube and catheter into the peritoneal cavity.
- The tube and catheter are disconnected after about 10 minutes once the bag is empty.
- You can now go about your usual activities while the dialysis solution inside the peritoneal cavity absorbs waste and extra fluids from the body. This process can take 60 to 90 minutes.
- The other branch of the Y-shaped tube can be used to drain the fluid into a clean, empty bag.
- Repeat these steps up to four times a day and you can sleep with the solution in your stomach all night.

Most people prefer to do peritoneal dialysis at night. With automated peritoneal dialysis, a machine called a cycler pumps the fluid in and out of the body while you sleep.

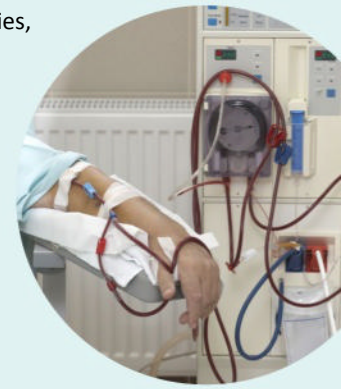
1Twenty80:

HOW LONG SHOULD PATIENTS BE ON DIALYSIS?

Dixon:

Once a patient has been diagnosed with end-stage kidney failure, he/she will require lifelong dialysis.

Hemodialysis is usually done three times a week, with each session lasting for four hours. In some countries, hemodialysis is conducted more frequently and for a longer duration as the outcomes are better.



In a typical peritoneal dialysis treatment, a patient will need to do four fluid exchanges a day. Each fluid exchange is kept in the abdominal cavity for about six hours.

YOU SHOULD START TO CONSIDER DIALYSIS IF YOUR KIDNEY FUNCTION DROPS TO LESS THAN 10 PERCENT.

1Twenty80:

WHERE CAN PATIENTS HAVE HEMODIALYSIS?

Dixon:

Patients may have their hemodialysis done in private or government hospitals or in dialysis centres that are managed by NGOs or private entities.

1Twenty80:

WHAT CAN PATIENTS DO WHILE ON HEMODIALYSIS?

Dixon:

During the four hours of hemodialysis, patients are free to do a number of things. A common sight is patients choosing to read, watch movies, complete their school or office work, or just catch up on sleep. This is also the time when some patients talk to each other too.

> PATIENTS ARE ADVISED NOT TO SHORTEN OR SKIP DIALYSIS SESSIONS TO IMPROVE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.

1Twenty80:

WHAT SHOULD PATIENTS AVOID WHILE ON HEMODIALYSIS?

Dixon:

While on dialysis, patients will need to control their fluid intake and make some adjustments to their diet. The amount of fluid they can take in a day will be restricted to about 500 ml to 1000 ml per day, upon their doctor's discretion.

They will also need to restrict the intake of foods that are rich in potassium and phosphate. This is because the accumulation of potassium in the blood can interfere with the heart rhythm. In addition, high blood phosphate levels will indirectly affect the integrity of the bones, and blood vessels which can cause itchiness.

Patients will also need to consult their doctors before taking any medications and supplements as these products may have adverse effects on dialysis patients. Patients are also advised not to shorten or skip dialysis sessions as getting full treatments can further improve their quality of life.

1Twenty80:

IS HEMODIALYSIS A COSTLY PROCEDURE?

Dixon:

Yes, it is.

Usually, hemodialysis treatments in private dialysis centres cost between RM200 to RM300. For those from lower-income families (B40), the government provides a 50 percent subsidy of RM100 to dialysis centres run by charity organisations.

Without the Ministry of Health (MOH) subsidy, NKF patients pay only RM90. NKF also offers further financial assistance to those who are unable to afford treatments. If and when they have the MOH subsidy, patients pay zero fees at NKF.

In reality, the actual cost of conducting hemodialysis treatments is increasing progressively. No thanks to the escalating cost of equipment and disposables, medications, and the frequent hikes in electricity and water tariffs. However, maintaining low fees on such treatments greatly benefits our patients.

1Twenty80:

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS OF KIDNEY HEMODIALYSIS?

Dixon:

As in any other medical procedure, complications can occur during hemodialysis. With that being said, hemodialysis is a safe procedure if done under supervision and in a dialysis centre that is properly equipped and staffed.

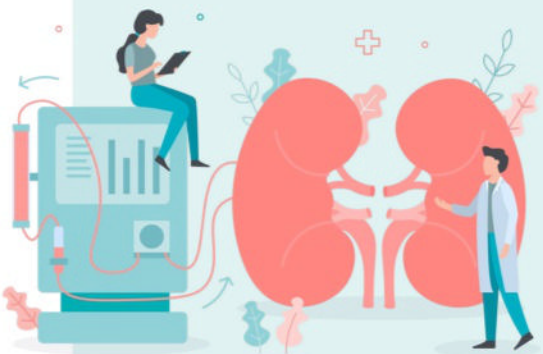
Many may see kidney dialysis might seem like a demobilising treatment that stretches throughout one's life. However, we must understand that it's a medical technology that's functioning just like our vital organs, our kidneys. We hope Mr. Dixon Kinson's sharing on kidney dialysis has educated and eased new patients to dialysis. ■

Sources: NHS UK, Cleveland Clinic

To those new to kidney dialysis,

Dialysis cannot completely replace the function of your kidneys. So, you will need to make some adjustments in your diet and limit the amount of fluid that you consume daily.

If you think dialysis is restricting your lifestyle, that's not true. Regular dialysis does so much for your body to function. It helps improve appetite, energy levels, and general well-being. It allows you to continue working and carrying out your normal daily activities, with some minor adjustments.



5 REASONS TO 'curry' on

How to spice up your health with curry leaves

By Isabel Andrew

Native to regions of India and Sri Lanka, the curry tree has become synonymous with Indian cuisine. More than just a popular culinary herb, curry leaves pack a bunch of health benefits thanks to their potent plant compounds. Here are five reasons why health is just a curry leaf away.

#1 HELPS WITH BRAIN HEALTH

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disease that's caused by the loss of neurons and oxidative stress. Curry leaves have demonstrated the ability to protect the nervous system by preventing brain cell damage and reversing some of its effects.

While there is hope, additional research is required to confirm these possible advantages.

#2 RICH IN ANTIOXIDANTS

Thanks to the compound girinimbine and the antioxidants – quercetin and gallic acid found in curry leaves, the growth of aggressive breast cancer cells can be inhibited. Animal studies suggest that curry leaves can induce cancer cell death and reduce tumour growth.

#3 MAY HELP WITH DIABETES

Curry leaves are believed to potentially lower high blood sugar levels and protect against diabetes-related symptoms like nerve pain and kidney damage. Paired with a low glycemic index (GI) diet, the high fibre content in curry leaves can impede the conversion of carbohydrates to glucose and boost insulin production.

#4 MAY REDUCE HEART DISEASE RISK FACTORS

Animal tests found that a compound called mahanimbine in curry leaves plays a key role in lowering high cholesterol and triglyceride levels. These happen to be high-risk factors contributing to heart disease.

#5 EASY TO ADD TO YOUR DIET

To make the most of curry leaves in your diet, consider these creative and versatile ideas:

- Sprinkle diced or crumbled dried curry leaves on top of savoury dishes for an added burst of flavour.
- Create infused oils by cooking curry leaves in hot oil, perfect for dipping or drizzling.
- Experiment by adding chopped curry leaves to savoury baked goods like bread and crackers.

Now that you know more about this Indian superleaf, try them out the next time you have your *chutneys*. Good luck 'currying' on a healthier life!

Sources: WebMD, Healthline, Health Shots

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Healing Among The Trees

A look into forest bathing

By Yasanthi Devi

In today's world, people are constantly stressed and anxious. Nature can be a great way to relax and de-stress. Forest bathing is a Japanese practice that involves immersing oneself in nature. It has been said to have many health benefits, including reducing stress, improving mental health, and potentially boosting the immune system.

Forest bathing can be done anywhere there are trees, whilst it's best done in a forest or other natural setting, parks and gardens are good options too! There are no rules for forest bathing, but some people find it helpful to follow a set of guidelines, such as:

- Walk slowly and mindfully.
- Pay attention to your senses.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Don't rush.
- Take breaks as needed.

Forest bathing can be a great way to connect with nature and improve your health. If you're feeling stressed or anxious, try forest bathing for a relaxing and rejuvenating experience.

Unveiling the Art of Forest Bathing
Forest bathing, also known as Shinrin-yoku, was first practised in Japan in the 1980s and quickly gained popularity as a way to combat the negative impacts of urbanisation and to enhance well-being. Forest bathing, as opposed to hiking or other outdoor activities, places a strong emphasis on presence, mindfulness, and a close relationship with nature. It nudges people to use their senses and embrace the healing aspects of the forest.

How does one dip their feet in forest bathing?

#1 Find a safe and calm spot

This place is meant for you to slow down and embrace the things that are happening in nature. This means being mindful and engulfing yourself in a sensory forest-based experience.

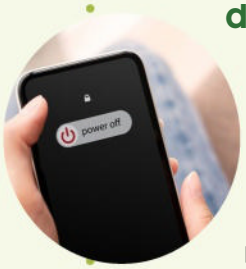
#2 Breathe and slow down

Remind yourself that it's okay to move slowly through the forest so you can see, feel and be more connected. Allow your senses to be in tune with the things that are going around you in nature.

#3 Listen and see

Pay attention to the birds singing and the trees' leaves rustling in the breeze. Take a look at the various shades of green that the trees have and the sunshine that reaches the branches.

#4 Turn off your devices or smart gadgetst

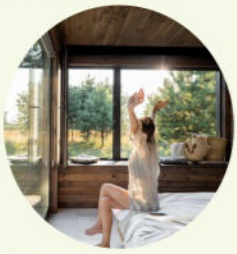


Mobiles and smartwatches can sometimes be a distraction with their persistent incoming messages or calls. When partaking in forest bathing, the whole idea is to disconnect and focus on the now. Having devices around you may hinder you from being present at the moment and fully relaxing.

#5 Remind yourself to breathe every now and then

Breathe deeply and slowly into your abdomen. The body receives a signal to relax when the air exhaled is twice as long as the inhalation.

#6 Try not to think too much

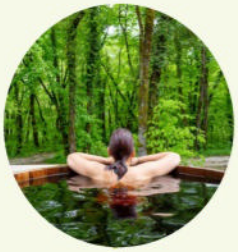


Try not to think about your to-do list or other everyday concerns while you sit quietly and observe with mindfulness. Thinking too much can be exhausting, hence giving yourself a mental break is important for a healthier mind.

#7 Keep your eyes wide open

Studies have revealed that people are most relaxed when they are surrounded by green and blue colours, which are found in nature. Some of the colours found in nature are proven (in studies) to have a positive impact on one's mental health. This is why people pay close attention when it comes to picking out a colour for their walls and house.

#8 Stay until you're comfortable



There is no time limit for forest bathing. It can be a quick trip to sightsee some natural landscape or it can be a short stay of two hours. Do ensure that if you're forest bathing, it's best advised to do it during daylight to ensure you have good visibility and better safety.

Who can try out forest bathing?

- Forest bathing can be beneficial for adults and children. However, adult supervision and guidance are important to ensure that your child is having a safe forest bathing experience.
- Please be on the lookout for bugs such as mosquitoes, leeches, or any poisonous insects that maybe be native to the forest area that you're visiting.

Safety is important!

- You're best advised to carry out forest bathing with trained guides.
- Do remember that you can carry out forest bathing in almost any place that has trees, this includes parks, gardens, and even forest reserves with parks. ■

Source: National Geography's Guide To Forest Bathing, Forestry England, Time (Benefits of Forest Bathing)

Vax your Vacays

A guide to happier and safer adventures

By Isabel Andrew

Globetrotter or not, we have all heard of the diseases and infections spreading across the globe, from the Parisian attack of blood-sucking bed bugs to infamous tropical diseases in Asian countries. In the midst of adapting to the ever-evolving COVID-19 pandemic, it's safe to say that vaccinations are non-negotiable for modern-day adventurers.

Are you planning a trip abroad? Tick your list of safety shots with this guide on countries and their recommended or required vaccinations.

North America

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- Polio
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Meningitis
- Influenza

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Japanese encephalitis
- Rabies
- COVID-19

South America

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- Polio
- Typhoid
- Rabies
- Yellow fever
- Japanese encephalitis
- Dengue & Malaria

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Japanese encephalitis
- Rabies
- COVID-19

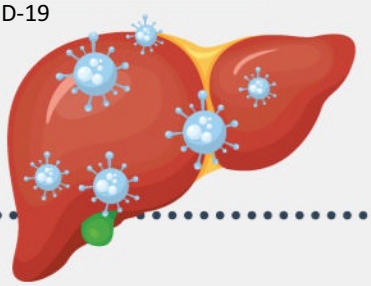
Antarctica

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- Meningitis
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Influenza

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- COVID-19



Europe

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

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- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- Polio
- Typhoid
- Rabies
- Meningitis
- Varicella (chickenpox)

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Bacille Calmette–Guérin - BCG (Tuberculosis)
- COVID-19

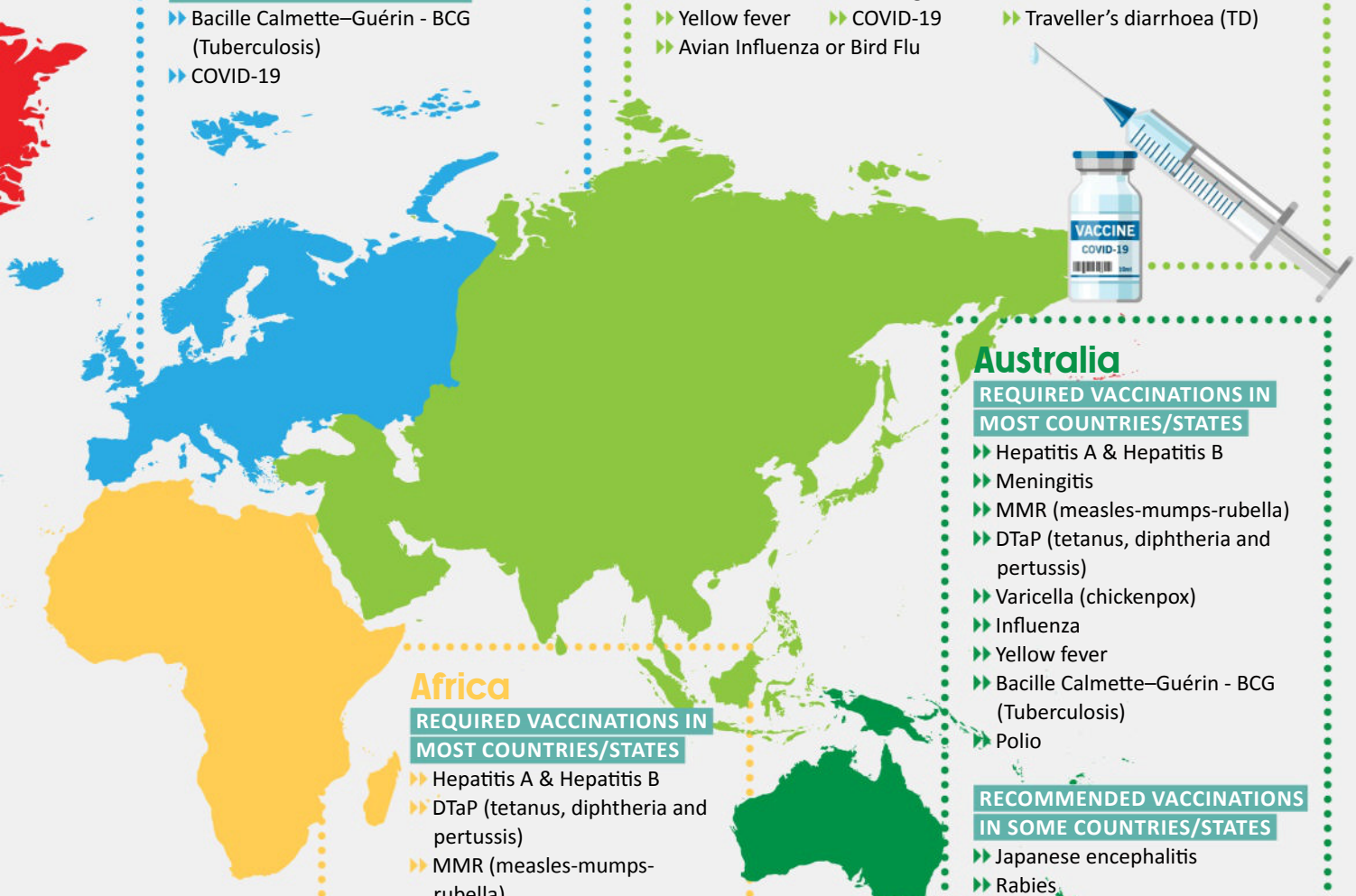
Asia

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Bacille Calmette–Guérin - BCG (Tuberculosis)
- Dengue & Malaria
- Polio
- Rabies
- Japanese encephalitis
- Typhoid

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Cholera
- Meningitis
- Bilharzia
- Yellow fever
- COVID-19
- Traveller's diarrhoea (TD)
- Avian Influenza or Bird Flu



Australia

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- Meningitis
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Influenza
- Yellow fever
- Bacille Calmette–Guérin - BCG (Tuberculosis)
- Polio

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Japanese encephalitis
- Rabies
- Cholera
- Typhoid
- COVID-19

Africa

REQUIRED VACCINATIONS IN MOST COUNTRIES/STATES

- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- DTaP (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis)
- MMR (measles-mumps-rubella)
- Dengue & Malaria
- Polio
- Yellow fever

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS IN SOME COUNTRIES/STATES

- Bacille Calmette-Guérin – BCG (Tuberculosis)
- COVID-19

Sources: Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Malaysia My Visa, Go2Africa, Passport Health USA, European Centre For Disease Prevention And Control, Travel Health Pro.UK, Department Of Health And Aged Care Australia, World Health Organisation

Travelling, after all, is a two-way exchange, and being a responsible traveller means ensuring that our adventures leave a positive impact. So, before you set off on your next exciting journey, remember that vaccinations are the key to a safe, healthy, and unforgettable travel experience. *Au revoir!* ■

A PIE THING

Pies are an all-in-one all rounder

By Edeline Anne Goh

Chicken pot pie

Peanut butter banana pie

There are days when preparing a 3-course meal at home is a simple affair but there are also days where you're juggling so much that all you want is a meal with everything in it.

Be it if you're having sweet cravings or in need of a hearty meal, these simple pie recipes will warm your heart with each bite.

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CHICKEN POT PIE

INGREDIENTS

150 g	Chicken breasts
2	Carrots
1	Leek
1	Onion
2 cloves	Garlic
3 tbsp	Cooking cream
1 tbsp	All purpose flour
1 tbsp	Unsalted butter
1	Bay leaf
4 sheets	Puff pastry
Salt	
Pepper	

METHOD

1. Slice chicken breast into tiny cubes and set aside.
2. Then, chop carrots, lewd, onion and garlic into small pieces and set aside all ingredients in individual bowls.
3. In a pan over medium heat, melt butter and add flour. Then, mix well.
4. Add cream and stir until well combined.
5. Add bay leaf, onion, garlic and stir until onions are soft.
6. Then, add carrots and leek. Cover pan with a lid for about 5 minutes or until carrots have softened.
7. Add chicken breast and cook well.
8. Add salt and pepper to taste.
9. Transfer chicken filling to individual ramekins and place a sheet of puff pastry at the top. Be sure the press the edges of the puff around the ramekin to secure it.
10. Bake in an air-fryer for 25 minutes at 160°C.

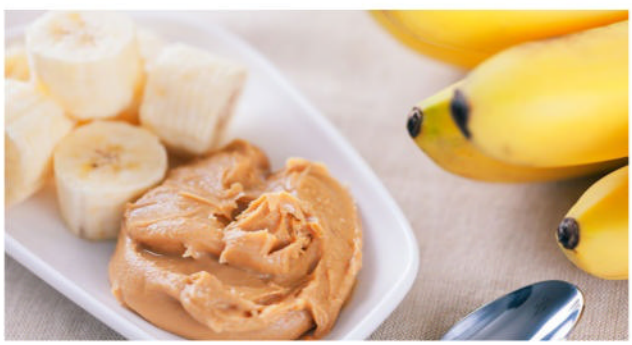
PEANUT BUTTER BANANA PIE

INGREDIENTS

2	Medium-sized bananas
1 tsp	Cinnamon
½ tsp	Nutmeg
¼ tsp	Salt
1 tbsp	Peanut butter
4 tbsps	Rolled Oats
20g	Unsalted butter

METHOD

1. Chop banana into small cubes and transfer to a bowl
2. Mix peanut butter into the bowl and gently stir well. It's alright if there are chunks of peanut butter amidst the chopped bananas.
3. In a separate bowl, mix well rolled oats, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.
4. Scoop bananas to ramekins and top it with oat mixture.
5. Once completed, use about 5 grammes of butter and place it on top of the oats mixture.
6. Bake in an air-fryer at 160°C for 5 minutes
7. Enjoy immediately. ■



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